

IN THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A method for determining an optimal bid for an item in a market, said method comprising:
  - a) selecting characteristics of said market;
  - b) selecting a bidding model;
  - c) estimating a structure of said market, wherein unobservable variables are expressed in terms of observable bids by inverting said bidding model;
  - d) determining a bid function; and
  - e) determining said optimal bid wherein said optimal bid is calculated based upon a received evaluation criteria and said bid function.
2. (Original) The method as recited in Claim 1, wherein said step a) comprises:  
receiving a first user input, wherein said first user input comprises information identifying an item to be bid on;  
accessing a database;  
retrieving historical bids data from said database;  
retrieving auction characteristics data from said database, wherein said auction characteristics data comprise information relating to historical auctions of items similar to said item to be bid on;  
outputting said historical bids data; and  
outputting said auction characteristics data.
3. (Original) The method as recited in Claim 1, wherein said step b) comprises:  
receiving auction characteristics data;  
accessing a database;  
retrieving from said database said bidding model; wherein said bidding model is selected based on a corresponding relevance of said auction characteristics data; and  
outputting said bidding model.

4. (Previously Presented) The method as recited in Claim 1, wherein said step c) comprises:
  - receiving said bidding model;
  - receiving historical bids data;
  - transforming said historical bids data to a sample of inverted bids, wherein said historical bids data are transformed by inverting said bidding model;
  - estimating a structure of said market, wherein said sample of inverted bids receives application of statistical density estimation techniques to obtain said structure; and
  - outputting said structure.
5. (Original) The method as recited in Claim 1, wherein said step d) comprises:
  - receiving a second user input;
  - receiving a structure;
  - generating a bid function, wherein said bid function is based on said structure and said second user input; and
  - outputting said bid function.
6. (Original) The method as recited in Claim 5, wherein said second user input comprises:
  - an auction format;
  - a valuation of said item; and
  - an expected number of rival bidders.
7. (Cancelled)
8. (Currently Amended) A computer system comprising:
  - a bus;
  - a memory interconnected with said bus; and

a processor interconnected with said bus, wherein said processor executes a method for determining an optimal bid for an item n a market, said method comprising:

- a) selecting characteristics of said market;
- b) selecting a bidding model;
- c) estimating a structure of said market, wherein unobservable variables are expressed in terms of observable bids by inverting said bidding model;
- d) determining a bid function; and
- e) determining said optimal bid wherein said optimal bid is calculated based upon a received evaluation criteria and said bid function.

9. (Original) The computer system as recited in Claim 8, wherein said step a) comprises:

receiving a first user input, wherein said first user input comprises information identifying an item to be bid on;

accessing a database;

retrieving historical bids data from said database;

retrieving auction characteristics data from said database, wherein said auction characteristics data comprise information relating to historical auctions of items similar to said item to be bid on;

outputting said historical bids data; and

outputting said auction characteristics data.

10. (Original) The computer system as recited in Claim 8, wherein said step b) comprises:

receiving auction characteristics data;

accessing a database;

retrieving from said database said bidding model, wherein said bidding model is selected based on a corresponding relevance of said auction characteristics data; and

outputting said bidding model.

11. (Previously Presented) The computer system as recited in Claim 8, wherein said step c) comprises:

receiving said bidding model;

receiving historical bids data;

transforming said historical bids data to a sample of inverted bids, wherein said historical bids data are transformed by inverting said bidding model;

estimating a structure of said market, wherein said sample of inverted bids receives application of statistical density estimation techniques to obtain said structure; and

outputting said structure.

12. (Original) The computer system as recited in Claim 8, wherein said step d) comprises:

receiving a second user input;

receiving a structure;

generating a bid function, wherein said bid function is based on said structure and said second user input; and

outputting said bid function.

13. (Original) The method as recited in Claim 12, wherein said second user input comprises:

an auction format;

a valuation of said item; and

an expected number of rival bidders.

14. (Cancelled)

15. (Currently Amended) A computer readable medium for causing a computer system to execute the steps n a method for determining an optimal bid for an item in a market, said method comprising:

a) selecting characteristics of said market;

b) selecting a bidding model;

c) estimating a structure of said market, wherein unobservable variables are expressed in terms of observable bids by inverting said bidding model;

d) determining a bid function; and

e) determining said optimal bid wherein said optimal bid is calculated based upon an evaluation criteria and said bid function.

16. (Original) The computer readable medium as recited in Claim 15, wherein said step a) comprises:

receiving a first user input, wherein said first user input comprises information identifying an item to be bid on;

accessing a database;

retrieving historical bids data from said database;

retrieving auction characteristics data from said database, wherein said auction characteristics data comprise information relating to historical auctions of items similar to said item to be bid on;

outputting said historical bids data; and

outputting said auction characteristics data.

17. (Original) The computer readable medium as recited in Claim 15, wherein said step b) comprises:

receiving auction characteristics data;

accessing a database;

retrieving from said database said bidding model, wherein said bidding model is selected based on a corresponding relevance of said auction characteristics data; and

outputting said bidding model.

18. (Previously Presented) The computer readable medium as recited in Claim 15, wherein said step c) comprises:

receiving said bidding model;

receiving historical bids data;  
transforming said historical bids data to a sample of inverted bids, wherein said historical bids data are transformed by inverting said bidding model;  
estimating a structure of said market, wherein said sample of inverted bids receives application of statistical density estimation techniques to obtain said structure; and  
outputting said structure.

19. (Original) The computer readable medium as recited in Claim 15, wherein said step d) comprises:

receiving a second user input;  
receiving a structure;  
generating a bid function, wherein said bid function is based on said structure and said second user input; and  
outputting said bid function.

20. (Currently Amended) The computer readable medium as recited in Claim 19, wherein said second user input comprises:

an auction format;  
a valuation of said item; and  
an expected number of rival bidders.

21. (Cancelled)